



Project

Memorial (Route 1) Bridge
Rehabilitation, Portsmouth,
NH and Kittery, ME

Project No.

BHF-X-T-0101(015), 13678

From

Addie Kim

Meeting Notes**Subject**

Public Meeting
April 6, 2006, 7 PM
Portsmouth City Hall

Presenters:

Nancy Mayville – NHDOT – Project Manager
John Watters – HNTB Corporation – Project Manager
Addie Kim – HNTB Corporation – Environmental Task Manager
Gene McCarthy – McFarland-Johnson, Inc. – Traffic Task Manager

Introduction

The purpose of this meeting was to present the preferred alternative for the Memorial Bridge (U.S. Route 1) Rehabilitation Project to the general public and public officials from Portsmouth and Kittery. The meeting was held at Portsmouth City Hall in Portsmouth, NH at 7 PM on Thursday, April 6, 2006. More than 30 persons attended the meeting, which included representatives of the New Hampshire House of Representatives, the Portsmouth City Manager, Portsmouth City Council, Portsmouth Department of Public Works, the Kittery Town Manager, Kittery Town Council, the Kittery Town Planner, Strafford Regional Planning Commission, Southern Maine Regional Planning Commission, Portsmouth Advocates, Portsmouth Police Department, East Coast Greenway, Eastern Trail Management District, Seacoast Area Bicycle Routes, Bikeway Alliance of New Hampshire/Bicycle Coalition of Maine, Foster's Daily Democrat, the New Hampshire Department of Transportation (NHDOT) and the Maine Department of Transportation (MaineDOT) (see attached sign-in sheet). The meeting was formatted as a PowerPoint presentation followed by a question and answer period.

Project Overview

Nancy Mayville, Project Manager, NHDOT indicated that the project involves rehabilitation of the Memorial Bridge and replacement of the Scott Avenue Bridge. She indicated that this meeting is being held to obtain broad public input into how the design and repairs should be performed on the Memorial Bridge. The Memorial Bridge is jointly owned by the state of New Hampshire and the state of Maine. On the Portsmouth approach, the U.S. Route 1

approach (referred to as the Scott Avenue Bridge) is owned by the City of Portsmouth. She introduced representatives of the MaineDOT and NHDOT and project team.

Nancy Mayville indicated that the first phase of the project involved the inspections of both bridges. The second phase of the project involves obtaining public input into the design, identifying the preferred alternative, and documenting environmental and cultural impacts. The third phase will involve preparation of construction plans and bid documents. This is the third public meeting held to obtain public input. The first meeting was held with public officials in Portsmouth and Kittery to obtain a better understanding of local traffic concerns. At the second public meeting, the options for construction phasing were reviewed. Since the second meeting, the NHDOT and MaineDOT have come to agreement on the preferred alternative.

Nancy Mayville stated that, under an agreement with MaineDOT, NHDOT is managing the project. The project will receive 80% federal funding, and 20% state funding from the bridge replacement programs in both New Hampshire and Maine. An agreement with the City of Portsmouth is in place regarding the Scott Avenue Bridge Replacement that is incorporated as part of the project. The project is on the NHDOT 10-year improvement program for 2010-2011. Total funding committed totals \$38.4 million. Of this, \$18.1 million is from New Hampshire federal and state funds, \$18.9 million is contributed by Maine federal and state funds, and \$1.5 million consists of funding from the City of Portsmouth (for Scott Avenue) and corresponding federal matching funds.

Nancy Mayville stated that the Memorial Bridge was built in 1922. With the understanding of the poor condition of the bridge and the importance of the route, the goal is to have final design completed by November 2007 so that the project can be advertised for bids at that time, if funding becomes available. Additionally, the project will be ready for bids and construction should critical problems arise with the bridge. NHDOT and MaineDOT are working towards completing the project sooner than the 2010 programmed date, and the bridge is being monitored closely on a 6-month inspection schedule.

Project Background and Preferred Alternative

John Watters, HNTB Corporation, indicated that the three bridges in the project area are the Scott Avenue approach in Portsmouth, the three truss sections of the Memorial Bridge including the vertical lift bridge over the Piscataqua River, and the Kittery viaduct approach. The Memorial Bridge completes approximately 4,000 vertical lifts a year to accommodate navigation on the Piscataqua River and carries 11,000 vehicles per day. During the summer months, several hundred pedestrians and cyclists use the bridge on a daily basis.

John Watters indicated that the project is the number one priority NHDOT Red List Bridge. The mechanical components of the bridge and structural steel framing are deteriorating. As part of the project, the control house will be moved from its current location atop the lift span, and the open steel grid and sidewalks will be replaced with a solid surface. (The machinery house will remain in the center of the lift span.) Testing indicated that the concrete of the Scott Avenue Bridge is actively deteriorating and thus the bridge requires complete replacement.

The mechanical components of the Memorial Bridge, the trunnion (axle) and sheaves (wheels) of the pulley system, and counterweight ropes have exceeded their fatigue life and are on a six-month inspection schedule. The steel framing, particularly the deck framing system of the lift span under the open grating, has experienced significant corrosion from winter-time salt de-icing applications. Emergency repairs effected in 2004 raised the weight limit on the bridge from 6 tons to 20 tons.

As part of the current study, the preferred alternative has been determined to consist of: (1) the replacement of the lift span, which will reduce construction time and future maintenance costs and has a similar cost to the lift span rehabilitation option, and (2) the complete 5-month bridge roadway closure, which was preferred by the public over the partial closure, alternating one-way traffic option. The complete 5-month closure would involve the shortest traffic disruption and is more economical. The lift span replacement would be performed through a float-in, float-out operation. The old span would be recycled, and a new fabricated lift span would be barged in. The existing riveted steel members are corroded resulting in pack rust. The new structure would have solid members with reduced lateral cross-bracing. This alternative would result in construction time savings and would be more efficient. The control house would be relocated to the NH flanking span to improve safety, access to sanitary facilities, and operator visibility. Roadway and sidewalk safety will be enhanced by replacing the open steel grid grating on the lift span and replacing timber planking on sidewalks with lightweight concrete to provide a better travel surface. The new solid deck will also keep deicing salts from corroding the underlying steel lift span.

The new replacement bridge for the Scott Avenue Bridge will improve roadway geometry and visibility, as fewer piers will be installed, enabling the pier in the middle of the roadway to be removed.

Bridge Closures Options and Impacts on Traffic, Pedestrians, and Bicyclists

John Watters indicated that the impacts of the project on vehicular traffic, pedestrians/bicyclists, businesses, navigation, the environment, and historic resources were assessed. He reviewed the traffic impacts associated with the complete five-month closure option: two months when the lift span is locked in the up position (and pedestrians/bicycles will not be able to cross) followed by three more months of complete roadway closure for vehicles, when a sidewalk may be opened, although there are safety issues with proximity to the construction zone. This work would most likely be scheduled for March 1 through August 1, and is weather dependent. The entire construction time period would be 24 months, with occasional two to three days of navigational closures.

The reduced partial closure option would involve two months when the lift span is locked in the up position, followed by six months of alternating, one-way traffic operation, with signals at both ends of the bridge. The total construction time period would be a minimum of 24 months, and there would be occasional two to three day navigational closures. This construction would most likely be scheduled between March 1 and November 1, but there is a much greater risk of delays into the winter and Christmas tourist season. The reduced partial closure would involve greater traffic queuing/congestion and would affect mobility of emergency responders.

Gene McCarthy, McFarland-Johnson, Inc., indicated that traffic would be detoured during either construction option to the Sarah Long Bridge on the Route 1 Bypass or the I-95 Bridge. Intercept surveys have indicated that local traffic would prefer to use the Sarah Long Bridge, but traffic detour signs will direct “out-of-town” traffic to I-95, which has more capacity.

Gene McCarthy indicated that the partial reduced closure, with alternating one-way traffic, would involve greater queuing and would have much greater traffic impacts on downtown Portsmouth, Badger’s Island, and downtown Kittery. A signal system would be installed on the south side of Badger’s Island, and the existing signal at the Portsmouth end of the bridge would be used. With this system, one direction would be totally stopped, allowing cars to pass in the other direction in between bridge lifts. The traffic flow would then be reversed as part of an alternating cycle.

Gene McCarthy explained that the traffic simulation indicates that the reduced capacity on the bridge creates very long queues both in Portsmouth and completely across Badger’s Island into Kittery. In Portsmouth in the northbound direction, the queues would extend past Pleasant Street to Middle Street, with fifty to seventy cars waiting, and only a few cars traversing the bridge at a time. Under this scenario, the bridge also still has to lift for river traffic, which means very restricted capacity and significant queuing and potential disruption to business customers from congestion. For this reason, the alternating one-way traffic option is not recommended.

Gene McCarthy stated that pedestrian and bicyclists would be affected during the proposed two-month bridge closure and that some type of accommodation would be made during this time period for pedestrians and bicyclists. During the majority of construction activities, a sidewalk would be available for use by pedestrians and cyclists.

John Watters stated that an Environmental Study Report was being prepared to support a Categorical Exclusion Determination under the National Environmental Policy Act. He stated that public input into the study process has been elicited in identifying the preferred alternative, impacts, and mitigation. Part of the public outreach has included performing surveys. In August 2005, a survey was performed of motorists, pedestrians, and bicyclists stopped during bridge lifts to determine how people use the bridge. The surveys included 236 cars and 101 pedestrians/cyclists. In November 2005, a navigational survey was sent to 25 of the large navigational entities. In the January 17, 2006 public meeting, 125 surveys were distributed to the 100 to 130 attendees. A business survey was performed in February that included mailing to approximately 200 business property owners in Portsmouth and Kittery and hand delivering approximately 350 surveys door to door to business owners. Of these, approximately 100 to 150 were distributed in Kittery, including Kittery Foreside to the rotary and Badger’s Island. Approximately 200 to 250 surveys were distributed in the Portsmouth business district. During the August 2005 surveys, the construction timeframes had not yet been refined, and the surveys were based on options of an estimated 1 to 1 ½ year for complete closure and 2 to 3 years for partial closure with alternating one-way traffic. Based on the revised and significantly reduced bridge roadway closures of the proposed construction schedule, the results (showing that the majority of motorists and pedestrians/cyclists prefer partial closure with alternating one-way traffic) are considered skewed and not as representative. The public meeting survey indicated that 71% preferred a complete bridge roadway closure, and 60% of business survey respondents preferred the complete bridge roadway closure over partial, alternating one-way traffic. The response rate

for navigational surveys was approximately 70% and provided input into how closures of the bridge should be performed during construction.

Natural and Cultural Resources

Addie Kim, HNTB Corporation, indicated that the environmental study process included identifying environmental constraints and issues through agency input that included notifications to federal, state, regional, and municipal officials, and a series of meetings with natural and cultural resource agencies. The Piscataqua River has some of the highest currents on the East Coast, and the substrate at the bridge site is predominantly a hard substrate. The wetlands in New Hampshire and Maine are defined by the tides, with a rocky, riprapped coastline in Maine and the seawall in Portsmouth delineating the limit of the highest observable tide. She indicated that no excavation or work involving dredging is proposed on the river bottom or on the tidal flats landward of the seawall in Portsmouth, and applicable wetland permit applications would be sought from regulatory agencies.

The Memorial Bridge and the parks that were constructed at either end of the bridge, the Memorial Park on the Portsmouth approach and the John Paul Jones Memorial Park in Maine, have been determined to be eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places as part of the Memorial Bridge Historic District. A Draft Historic Structures Report has been prepared that the State Historic Preservation Offices of Maine and New Hampshire (SHPOs) have determined meets Historic American Building Survey/Historic American Engineering Record requirements. Consultation with the SHPOs is ongoing regarding the effects of the proposed lift span replacement on historic resources and proposed mitigation measures, and will be determined through the Section 106 process under the National Historic Preservation Act.

Cultural resources at the bridge site include 18th and 19th century waterfront development. The Portsmouth approach area, which includes Memorial Park, was constructed over approximately 20 feet of fill along the historic Portsmouth waterfront. Archaeological surveys in Memorial Park indicate that excavation above 4 feet is not likely to affect archaeological resources. Archaeological monitoring is proposed during construction for any excavation along the waterfront and for excavations below this depth in Memorial Park.

Construction Costs and Next Steps

John Watters presented the estimated construction costs for the complete/partial closure options and lift span replacement/rehabilitation options. These estimates indicate that the costs for the lift span replacement and rehabilitation are similar and that the complete closure option is more cost-effective (savings of \$4 to \$5 million) than the partial closure with alternating, one-way traffic. The preferred alternative has been determined to be the lift span replacement and complete five-month roadway closure during construction.

John Watters indicated that the next steps include design approval from FHWA anticipated by June 2006, final design (scheduled for completion by November 2007), and the start of construction, which depends on availability of funding.

Discussion

The meeting was opened up for questions and comments.

- **Leah Caswell, 37 South Street, Portsmouth Advocates indicated that her understanding is that rehabilitation of the lift span would preserve the historic integrity of the bridge and would involve lower costs. She stated that the Memorial Bridge is the most significant historic bridge in the state and one of two lift bridges in the state; a new lift would destroy its historic integrity.**
Nancy Mayville indicated that consultation is occurring with historic and cultural resource groups, the New Hampshire Division of Historic Resources, FHWA, and the Maine Historic Preservation Commission as part of the Section 106 historic review process. Two meetings were held in March, and another meeting will be held next week. The NHDOT is reaching out to consulting parties, and letters were sent out to potentially interested parties to invite participation in the Section 106 process.
- **Leah Caswell indicated that an e-mail had been received from the NH DHR on the lift span replacement and inquired what the bridge would look like with the new lift span.**
Nancy Mayville invited participation in the Section 106 historic review process by interested parties and noted that the purpose of the meeting was to receive public comment. John Watters indicated that boards were displayed in the room showing the bridge before and after the lift span replacement, and were shown as part of the presentation.
- **Lee Roberts, Portsmouth resident inquired, if surveys were performed, why residents were not questioned. Her understanding is that the Memorial Bridge is one of two bridges that scored the highest on the National Register rankings in the state. She inquired whether a final decision had been made on the alternatives. She noted that the bridge was christened by the former mayor.**
The comment was noted. The preferred alternative, involving replacement of the lift span and rehabilitation of the other portions of the Memorial Bridge, were presented this evening.
- **Glen Schwaery, Kittery Town Council inquired about the deadline for funding for a November 2007 start of construction.**
Nancy Mayville replied that the NHDOT has a 10-year Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP), and funding is allocated from a variety of sources. She indicated that the project was scheduled for 2010, but that this is a dynamic situation and could change. The goal is to get the project plans and contract documents ready as soon as possible, focusing on the condition of the bridge, so that the project can be constructed sooner.
- **Cameron Wake, Seacoast Area Bicycle Routes, inquired whether there was a scenario where the decks would not be filled in. He mentioned the need to improve bicycle/pedestrian connections coming off the bridge for Portsmouth traffic to Market Square. He noted that this is the only crossing in this area and is a key link on the East Coast Greenway from Florida to Maine.**
Nancy Mayville responded that the NHDOT is committed to constructing a solid deck. She indicated that pedestrian/bicycle accommodations would be determined in final

design. She noted that she attended, along with Tom Jamieson, the NHDOT bicycle coordinator, and John Watters, a presentation of the East Coast Greenway that was very interesting. She noted that the best way to funnel input into the design was through the bicycle/pedestrian advisory committee and that the best way for NHDOT to get information out to the bicycle community was through Steve Workman and Scott Bogle, the regional planning commission, local MPO representative on the committee.

- **Ned Raynolds, Portsmouth City Council, thanked the DOTs for the public outreach efforts and stated that the City Councilors had not officially discussed the preferred alternative; the council is working closely with city staff and John Bohenko. He stated that he considered the reduced closure alternative during construction the best option. An extended closure, under the alternating traffic scenario, would create gridlock on cross-streets. He stated that the January 2006 10-year Master Plan has a strong theme of increasing bicycle/pedestrian friendliness. Since the lift span will not be replaced often, he inquired whether the same restricted width roadway and sidewalks would be used or whether consideration is being given to widening on either side to incorporate a bicycle/pedestrian lane.**

Nancy Mayville indicated that the same truss size and roadway width will be required for the bridge to work. The NHDOT will further review the estimated costs and impacts that would result if the sidewalks were to be widened. Avoidance and minimization of historic impacts is evaluated under the Section 4(f) process. Under the Section 4(f) process, NHDOT is working with the Federal Highway Administration to justify and document the need for impacts to the historic structure. Funding is another consideration in formulating the preferred alternative. The trade-offs of the alternatives will be documented, and the process involves getting feedback on the preferred alternative.

- **Terrence Parker, Portsmouth business owner and representative on a bicycle committee, stated that NHDOT provides grant money to the Portsmouth Police to ticket cyclists who do not walk their bikes over the bridge.**

Nancy Mayville replied that she was not aware of this practice. She stated that NHDOT, working with Tom Jamieson, the NHDOT bicycle coordinator, would look at the menu of options to accommodate pedestrians/bicycles for the interim period before construction. Nancy Mayville indicated that answers are not available, but suggested contacting Scott Bogle on the pedestrian/bicycle advisory committee in the future for responses to issues raised at this meeting.

- **Steve Workman, Eastern Trail Management District and East Coast Greenway acknowledged the presence of the Maine DOT bicycle/pedestrian coordinator, Dan Stewart. He indicated that the best way to resolve the problem of interim bicycle access would be to speed up the project and finish construction. Bicyclists should be able to ride through during the complete closure (when the sidewalk is open).**

Nancy Mayville replied that bicyclists will need to walk during the construction closure of the roadway, as there will only be one sidewalk open for public use during that time.

- **Tim Roache, Seacoast MPO inquired whether performance incentives would be offered to the contractor to minimize closure times.**

Nancy Mayville responded that this is on the menu of options being considered and has been used in the past by NHDOT. She stated that usually incentives/disincentives go hand and hand and whether this will be used for this project is not yet known.

- **Jan Marx, Gates Street resident stated that replacement of the center span would not maintain the historic character of the area and is not favored by residents around the bridge. She stated that surveys are skewed.**

Nancy Mayville replied that the surveys were handed out at the public meetings, which were advertised in local newspapers and were attended by abutters.

- **Steve Pesci, Portsmouth resident, thanked the DOT for the well attended public meeting and willingness to listen. He stated that design of a \$40 million project should be performed by engineers using the best means possible, rather than through public surveys. He inquired whether the alternative transport for pedestrians and bicyclists during the two-month construction would be a ferry or a shuttle.**

Nancy Mayville responded that a specific option (ferry vs. shuttle) has not yet been identified, but it is very clear that the Memorial Bridge is the only way for pedestrians and bicycles to cross the river and is an important link. The signed vehicular detours are not meant for pedestrians and bicyclists.

- **Dan Stewart, MaineDOT pedestrian/bicycle coordinator commented that the project team has done a good job of eliciting public comment and applauded the effort to improve pedestrian/bicycle access. For safety, the DOTs are asking that cyclists walk and yield to pedestrians in this situation. He stated that he would like to be involved in the interim on discussions on providing public access.**

Nancy Mayville stated that, during meetings to review the preferred alternative with environmental and cultural groups, he can be conferenced in by phone. She recommended that he consult with Tom Jamieson to be invited to participate in these meetings. She indicated that he is also welcome to attend meetings in Concord and to check with Tom on arranging his participation.

- **Charles LaFlamme, Bicycle Coalition of Maine, stated that, even on the coldest of days, he counted thirty-three pedestrians and cyclists. He commented that this is an important span to the community, which will be closing for a couple of months. He inquired why the January meeting survey results and comments were not incorporated into the presentation. He inquired why the NHDOT bicycle/pedestrian coordinator was not present.**

John Watters stated that sixty surveys were returned at the public meeting, and almost all had comments. John Watters stated that surveys would be compiled and results presented as part of the Environmental Study Report documentation, but that due to the large number of responses, all survey comments could not be reviewed and incorporated for this presentation. Nancy Mayville indicated that Tom Jamieson was scheduled to attend the meeting, but had a conflict.

- **Charles LaFlamme asked whether the grating on Scott Avenue would be replaced. He indicated that the presentation of the East Coast Greenway discussed a Portland, Oregon Hawthorne Bridge project that widened the sidewalks to 10 ½ feet, which increased pedestrian/bicycle activity 200%. He inquired why this wasn't considered. He requested that wider sidewalks be considered, since this is the most frequently used bridge in both states.**

Nancy Mayville indicated that the steel decking would be filled and indicated that sidewalk widths of 6 feet and 8 feet were evaluated. The wider sidewalk would add weight and cost, and the current recommendation is for maintaining the current 6-foot sidewalk. As previously stated, the NHDOT will further review the estimated costs and impacts that would result if the sidewalks were to be widened. The final study recommendations will be summarized in the Environmental Study Report, and this will become a public document that will be sent to the pedestrian/bicycle committee contact (Steve Workman).

- **Lee Roberts, Portsmouth commented that replacement of the bridge was not the only option and that the rehabilitation plan was a valid, professionally engineered design. She stated that there are not valid reasons for not selecting the rehabilitation; these reasons are not addressed. She reiterated that many people in town care about the bridge.**

Nancy Mayville responded that the alternatives have been evaluated in depth, and the most prudent and cost-effective alternative has been determined to be the lift span replacement. The dialog with stakeholders will continue as part of the environmental review process.

- **Jeff Miller, Bicycle Coalition of Maine, thanked the MaineDOT and NHDOT for considering pedestrian/bicycle accommodations and inquired whether the two-month closure would be in March and April. He indicated support for pedestrian/bicycle accommodations during closures. He asked about August intercept survey results for drivers and pedestrians that showed a preference for alternating, one-way traffic during construction.**

John Watters replied that the August survey results were skewed, since the surveys estimated that complete closures of the bridge roadway would last about 1 to 1 ½ years and the partial closure, and one-way alternating traffic would last approximately 2 to 3 years. John Watters replied that, after the surveys were performed, more accurate information on the construction closures has been developed during the planning and design process. The estimated timeframes for construction roadway closures have since been substantially reduced (to 5 months and 8 months, respectively).

- **Jeff Miller commented that there is a real need for greater widths on the sidewalks, given the considerable pedestrian/bicycle traffic. He stated that he is not comfortable with the narrow widths of the sidewalks, and benefits of widening will be experienced for decades with increased physical activity on the bridge.**

The comment was noted.

- **Scott, local resident, inquired about timing of construction.**

Nancy Mayville replied that it is anticipated design could be completed so that the construction contract could be advertised in November 2007, with 16 months lead time to order materials. However, the funds are not actually programmed until federal fiscal year 2010, i.e. November 2009. If the project advertises on the earlier date, it is anticipated that the contractor could start in January 2008, and on-site construction activities could commence as early as March-April of 2008 with the major closure in 2009. These dates depend on the availability of funding.

- **John Fiers, local resident, asked at what point in the schedule the lightweight concrete would be in place to allow bicycles to ride across the bridge.**
John Watters replied that, under this schedule, August 2009 would be the earliest, after the lift span is replaced.
- **John Fiers reiterated the need for wider sidewalks to allow cyclists to ride across the bridge while the grating on the bridge is still in place. He cited the need to raise the height of the railing on the bridge and gave the example of the George Washington Bridge, where the sidewalk on the south side was widened to 8 to 10 feet.**
The comment was noted. Additional information has already been provided in previous responses.
- **Dan Hughes, State Representative for Newcastle and Rye cited the importance of the bridge and stated that he testified last week in the State House. He was informed by the House vice chair of the Public Works Committee that the NHDOT can construct the project at anytime and that funding can be shifted around. He raised the issue of widening the sidewalks and inquired how much additional weight and monies were involved. He commented that the 20-ton weight limit on the bridge is a life/safety issue and is used for ambulance service under mutual aid agreements. He stated that about 12 fire departments (including Portsmouth, Kittery, and the naval shipyard) use the bridge, and more use it if there is a major fire. There are a lot of close neighborhoods that need to access the bridge, and the density of wood frame houses is a concern for potential fire hazards. The naval shipyard ladder, the best equipped truck, is 63,000 pounds and has to bypass the bridge, and the truck pumper, at 38,000 pounds, can use the bridge. However, equipment following the pumper must be spaced out when crossing the bridge, because of the weight limit. He encouraged the use of incentives/penalties for the contractor to expedite construction. He asked whether the SHPO was invited to the public meeting.**
Nancy Mayville noted that incentives and penalties for the contractor go together and will be considered for this contract. She reiterated that the NHDOT is aware of all of these issues. Nancy Mayville indicated that the SHPO was invited and that the SHPOs met with the DOTs in early March and will meet again next week.
- **Dan Hughes stated that the two governors, Governors Lynch and Baldacci, need to get together and that time is of the essence to ensure public safety. The project is now in the 10-year plan for 2010.**
Nancy Mayville responded that the DOTs recognize the life safety issues, the New Hampshire and Maine DOT commissioners and governors are talking and a lot of people are working together to move the project forward.
- **Terrence Parker stated that bridge design should be sensible and should consider aesthetics. At the January public meeting, there was more description in the presentation of how the proposed design would differ from the existing bridge and would match the geometry of the existing bridge. This type of discussion might be helpful to audience members.**
John Watters acknowledged that the pedestrian/bicycle traffic received more attention, based on the comments from the last meeting. He referred to display boards showing the existing and proposed lift spans. He stated that the team has met with, and will continue to work with, historical preservation groups. The proposed lift span will be designed to

match the existing bridge geometry as much as possible. However, there will be no riveted steel on the bridge. The existing open laced members are prone to corrosion and will be replaced with similar solid members. The height will be the same as the existing bridge, the railing and cantilevered brackets will be the same. The cross bracing tends to collect rainwater and will be removed.

- **An audience member commented that the photos don't show the details and asked whether the design could replicate the historically significant detailing on the bridge.**

Nancy Mayville stated that one issue is the different strength of materials, i.e. the older steel has a lower strength and new steel will have a higher strength. Nancy Mayville stated that the old detailing would be extremely expensive and time consuming to replicate and is also prone to corrosion. Due to the excessive costs, delays in the construction schedule, and increased future maintenance, this option is not recommended.

- **Susanne Delanney, SABR (Seacoast Area Bicycle Routes) board stated that the existing conditions pose a hazard for walking, driving and the bridge needs to be restored as soon as possible to provide a safe bridge.**

The comment was noted.

- **Lee Roberts commented that in Europe, bicyclists ride in the same lanes as cars.**

The comment was noted.

- **Tony Barrett, Maine resident, supported the widening concept and stated that the Hawthorne Bridge involved 6 feet of sidewalk that was cantilevered and expanded the sidewalk to 8 feet. He commented that the cost of this was \$1.2 million for a longer bridge. He cited another example of a Charleston bridge, where the solution was a 12-foot wide bicycle/pedestrian lane only on the downstream side.**

The comment was noted. Additional information has already been provided in previous responses.

- **Dan Stewart, MaineDOT pedestrian/bicycle coordinator, commented that this would be a nice approach to add to the quality of life and economic prosperity, contributing to how the area looks.**

The comment was noted.

- **Steve Pesci, Portsmouth resident, commented that both states need to expedite the project and obtain funding to get the project completed. He stated that there is no need to pin historic vs. bicycle access issues. He commented that the differences between the rehabilitation and replacement are indistinguishable in the presentation boards and that it is the DOT's job to make the bridge safe.**

The comment was noted.

- **Cameron Wake commented that the project should be moved up to complete the bridgework sooner. If the project is completed, it will encourage more people to walk and cycle. He inquired what has to be done by November 2007 to start the construction two years earlier.**

Nancy Mayville stated that there is a lot that has to be done with the allocated funding. Basically, with currently scheduled and active construction projects, funds are not anticipated to be available for this project until 2010.

- **Cameron Wake stated that he would like to be part of the discussion.**

Nancy Mayville replied that there is a two-year process for developing New Hampshire's 10-Year Transportation Improvement Plan that is described in a brochure on the DOT website. The process includes public involvement to obtain input. The regional planning commissions also provide input into the 10-year plan. She cited the Long Range Transportation Business Plan managed by the New Hampshire Charitable Foundation that outlines the transportation future in New Hampshire over 30 years. She stated that information is available at www.dotnhtranplan.com, where there are flyers, a booklet, and information on the Citizen's Advisory Committee. She stated that Dave Tappen of the Bike Walk Alliance is involved, and their website is bcra.org.

The meeting concluded at 9:00 PM.

cc: All Presenters
FILE 34437-DS-002-004

We believe these minutes accurately reflect what transpired at the meeting. If these minutes are not in accordance with your understanding, please contact the undersigned promptly; otherwise, we will assume that you concur with the accuracy of the above.